



MEDIA RELEASE

THE TOWBES GROUP IS THE 2012 CITY OF SANTA BARBARA WATER HERO

SANTA BARBARA, CA – December 6, 2012

Not all heroes wear capes and fight crime; some fight for sustainability. The Towbes Group, a local commercial and residential property management company, is one such hero. They have made significant advances in saving water and implementing other sustainable practices at their properties.

Their corporate office was certified through the Green Business Program of Santa Barbara County in July of 2010, focusing on three main areas: water conservation, energy conservation, and recycling. Through retrofitting their toilets and urinals to high efficiency models and installing new faucet aerators, the corporate office's monthly water use has dropped by 41 percent, which is about 8,500 gallons per month.

Due to the success at the corporate office, The Towbes Group decided to implement similar sustainability measures at some of its managed properties, including the Rancho Franciscan Senior Apartments. In previous years, Rancho Franciscan had installed smart irrigation controllers which provide the appropriate watering schedule based on weather changes, reducing landscape water use by 29 percent. Last year, in order to further increase water savings, planter beds on the property were converted from sprinklers to drip irrigation. Half of the cost of this retrofit was covered by the City's Smart Landscape Rebate. With these recent changes, Rancho Franciscan Senior Apartments experienced further savings, for an additional 40 percent savings in landscape water use!

Through the success of its water conservation efforts at the corporate office and Rancho Franciscan, the Towbes Group is planning to continue these efforts throughout their whole property portfolio. Because this commitment to sustainability came from within the company, it will help them successfully implement other water wise and sustainable practices in their properties. "Being sustainable and improving where we live, where we do business, is consistent with everything the Towbes Group is trying to do in this community, so I think our water conservation efforts are part of that corporate culture," stated Craig Zimmerman, President of The Towbes Group. And it shows! Thanks to The Towbes Group for being the City's 2012 Water Hero!

The Towbes Group Water Hero story will air on the City's *Inside Santa Barbara* news magazine show on City TV Channel 18 during December and January. For more information on the Water Hero award, go to www.SaveWaterSB.org and click on "Water Heroes". To watch this story online, click here <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HjWav8uAPC4&feature=plcp>

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